

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 017490

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ORIGIN ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 TRSE-00 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 DHA-02 USIE-00

CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 ABF-01 OMB-01 /064 R

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NEA/ARN:PBULLEN

D/HA/ORM:RMOTT

S/S- MR. ORTIZ '

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION GENEVA NIACT IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 017490

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:SREF

SUBJECT: ASSYRIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

REFS: (A) GENEVA 366; (B) GENEVA 140

1. DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON MAKE THE PROBLEM OF PROTECTION OF UN MANDATED ASSYRIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES LOCATED AROUND BEIRUT EVEN MORE URGENT THAN UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

2. WHILE TRAVEL OUT OF BEIRUT IS AT PRESENT IMPOSSIBLE, THERE IS HOPE THAT CURRENT MEDIATION EFFORTS MAY BRING
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PAGE 02 STATE 017490

PERIOD OF CALM IN WHICH TRAVEL WILL BECOME POSSIBLE. TO

PREPARE FOR THAT OPPORTUNITY, MISSION SHOULD SEE UNHCR AT EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST THE UNHCR ARRANGE TO GET UN MANDATED ASSYRIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES NOW IN LEBANON TO APPROPRIATE SAFEHAVEN. THIS WOULD INCLUDE THOSE INTENDING TO COME TO THE U.S. AS WELL AS REFUGEES GOING TO OTHER COUNTRIES OF SETTLEMENT. FIRST STEP WILL BE FOR UNHCR TO ARRANGE SAFEHAVEN.

3. UNHCR WILL ALSO BE CONCERNED WITH WAYS TO FUND THE MOVEMENT, INCLUDING USE OF UNHCR EMERGENCY FUNDS, PENDING APPEAL TO GOVERNMENTS. ROLE OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

INVOLVED, ESPECIALLY THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, SHOULD ALSO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. FYI WE UNDERSTAND WCC HAS OFFERED TO PAY TRANSPORTATION COSTS.

4. COST OF CARE AND MAINTENANCE IN COUNTRY OF SAFEHAVEN LIKELY TO BE DIFFICULT POINT. AS MISSION AWARE, WITH CHANGED SYSTEM FOR EMERGENCY FUNDS ESTABLISHED UNDER NEW AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION AND LACK OF APPROPRIATIONS OR AUTHORITY UNDER CONTINUING RESOLUTION USG IN NO POSITION TO RESPOND NOW TO UNHCR APPEALS. WE ARE PREPARED ONCE APPROPRIATIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO RECOMMEND PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION FOR THIS PURPOSE UNDER NEW SYSTEM DECREED BY CONGRESS BUT CANNOT COMMIT OURSELVES FIRMLY AT THIS TIME. APPROPRIATIONS UNLIKELY BEFORE MARCH OR APRIL AT EARLIEST. SUGGEST MEANWHILE THAT UNHCR CONSIDER USING OWN EMERGENCY FUNDS SUBJECT TO SUBSEQUENT POSSIBLE REPLENISHMENT BY SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF GOVERNMENTS. SISCO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE017490
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JCHAVCHAVADZE:MTM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760026-0794
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760126/aaaaawui.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ORM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 GENEVA 366, 76 GENEVA 140
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 APR 2004 by woolfhd>; APPROVED <23 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASSYRIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON
TAGS: SREF, XF
To: GENEVA USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006